

Message Text

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TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR AND MRS. JOVA VISIT LOS REYES WOMEN'S PRISON

1. AMBASSADOR AND MRS. JOVA, ACCOMPANIED BY CG AND A&D OFFICERS, VISITED LOS REYES WOMEN'S PRISON FEB. 18. IN FRANK AND FRIENDLY CONVERSATION, PRISON DIRECTOR LIC. HILDA MARTA IBARRA AQUILERA ARTICULATEDLY DESCRIBED SEVERAL PROBLEMS SHE WAS HAVING WITH PARTICULAR AMCIT FEMALE PRISONERS BUT OPINED THAT, ON THE WHOLE, THE SITUATION RELATIVE TO AMCIT PRISONERS WAS GENERALLY SATISFACTORY. THE DIRECTRESS HAS AN ENLIGHTENED APPROACH TO PRISON ADMINISTRATION AND SEEMS TO BE HIGHLY MOTIVATED. SHE ALSO EXPRESSED HER PERSONAL DISPLEASURE, NOT ONLY AS PRISON DIRECTOR BUT AS HERSELF A FORMER JUDGE, WITH 1) THE ARREST, CONVICTION AND SENTENCING OF AMCITS FOR POSSESSION OF MINUSCULE AMOUNT OF MARIJUANA, 2) THE INADEQUATE NUMBER OFFEDERAL CRIMINAL JUDGES IN THE DISTRICT (4), AND CONSEQUENT SLOWNESS IN SENTENCES AND APPEALS, AND 3) THE PROPENSITY OF ONE OF THOSE FOUR(THE THIRD COURT) TO HAND DOWN EXTREMELY HARSH SENTENCES. SHE CLEARLY INDICATED SHE WOULD PREFER TO BE RID OF THE AMCIT PRISONERS AND WAS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE "WORK" IN ORDER TO REDUCE THEIR SENTENCES, INCLUDING AS COMMISSIONED WORK FOR THIS PURPOSE BOTH ART AND DANCE CLASSES. IN HER MIND LENGTHY SENTENCES AND CONSEQUENT LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. PRISONERS CAUSE COMPLICATIONS WITHIN PRISONS DUE TO DIFFERENCES IN SOCIOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS WITH (MOSTLY LOW CLASS) MEXICAN PRISONERS AND ALSO TO FRICTION BETWEEN U.S. AND MEXICAN GOVERNMENTS.

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2. ACCOMPANIED BY DIRECTOR, EMBASSY GROUP TOURED AUDITORIUM (WHERE NUMBER OF AMCIT PRISONERS WERE PARTICIPATING IN DANCE PRACTICE), VISITOR RECEPTION AREA, CAFETERIA, WORKSHOPS, DORMITORY CELLS, CHILDREN'S CENTER AND MEDICAL FACILITIES. IN ALL AREAS, AMBASSADOR AND MRS. JOVA AND OTHER MEMBERS OF GROUP ENGAGED IN EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL AMCIT PRISONERS.

3. MOST AMCIT PRISONERS HAVE, OVER TIME, FURNISHED AND EQUIPPED THEIR CELLS SO AS TO MAKE THEM RELATIVELY COMFORTABLE. THEY WERE, THEREFORE, DISTURBED OVER RUMORS((LARGELY CONFIRMED IN INITIAL CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR) OF PLANS TO PLACE ALL AMCIT PRISONERS IN ONE WING OF PRISON. THEY WERE ALSO UPSET OVER ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED FOLLOWING ESCAPE OF DWIGHT WORKER FROM LECUMBERRI. PRISONERS ALSO RAISED VARIOUS FAMILIAR ISSUES, BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND GENERAL, BUT THEIR ATTITUDE WAS GENERALLY CORDIAL AND HIGHLY APPRECIATIVE OF AMBASSADOR'S AND MRS. JOVA'S VISIT. AS ALMOST ALL OF THEM WERE ARRESTED AT THE MEXICO CITY AIRPORT "IN TRANSIT" THEY ARE EXTREMELY HOPEFUL THAT PRECEDENT OF RECENT RELEASE OF AN AUSTRALIAN (DAVID ALLAN JONES) ARRESTED IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, WILL EVENTUALLY BENEFIT THEM ALSO. IN ANSWER TO DIRECT QUESTIONS, THE DIRECTRESS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE ONLY MEXICAN CITIZENS HELD ON DRUG CHARGES ARE TWO ELDERLY "INDIAN" WOMEN WHO HAD BEEN CAUGHT PEDDLING MARIJUANA BETWEEN MEXICAN CITY AND NEARBY TOWNS. ALL OTHER NARCOTICS CHARGED PRISONERS ARE AMERICANS PLUS A FEW SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICAN WOMEN, ALSO ARRESTED "IN TRANSIT".

4. SEPTELS FOLLOW ON CERTAIN INDIVIDUAL CASES.
JOVA

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